

SAFETY MESSAGE

Personal Safety is our #1 priority



Blisters, Compiled by USDA-APHIS-CCEP

Blisters form when the skin rubs against another surface, causing friction. First, a tear occurs within the upper layers of the skin forming a space between the layers while leaving the surface intact. Fluid fills up a space between layers of skin like a cushioning layer to try to protect the area from whatever is rubbing it. Blisters form more easily on moist skin than on dry or soaked skin. Warm conditions assist blister formation.

Causes:

- Form as a result of heat, moisture and friction.
- Friction forces caused by inappropriate footwear.
- Form as a result of fungal infections of the skin, allergic reactions, or burns.
- Excessive foot perspiration.

Treatment:

Relieve your pain, keep the blister from enlarging and avoid infection.

- Small intact blisters that do not cause discomfort usually need no treatment.
- Large or painful blisters that are intact should be drained without removing the roof:
 - Clean the blister with rubbing alcohol or antibiotic soap and water.
 - Heat a straight pin or safety pin over a flame until the pin glows red, and allow it to cool before puncturing a small hole at the edge of the blister.
 - Drain the fluid with gentle pressure.
 - Apply an antibiotic ointment such as bacitracin with polymyxin B (double antibiotic ointment) or bacitracin alone.
 - Cover the blister with a bandage.
 - Change dressing daily.

Seek medical attention if you get a blister that:

- Is very painful and shows no sign of healing after a couple of days
- Has yellow crusting around it
- Is very red or warm skin around the blister
- Oozes yellowy pus not fluid
- Has red streaks leading away from the blister

Prevention:

- Apply petroleum jelly or talcum powder to reduce friction, if needed.
- Make sure your shoes are the right size and shape.
- Wear socks made from synthetic blends.